3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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789 the favour of the white man for any reason, can be supplied with a charm which will secure the end he has in view. For a few moments after the interview begins, he chews at the charm, then removes it from his mouth, trusting for the rest to what has been incised in his forehead. A favourable result may be confidently expected.

789 Thieving charms are also in use, and men who operate under such protection are called *balebi*. A 674 drug unknown to me is tied up in a leaf, and thrown on to the roof of the house to be robbed, and also at the door, to make the inmates sleep. The thieves enter, either by opening the now facile door, or by digging; and immediately place another drug under the heads of the sleeping owners of the house. "May they sleep heavily; may they dream dreams," is their incantation. Another medicine is worn on the wrists. So bold are the robbers thus protected that, when they have removed everything they wish, they awaken the sleepers, and demand food (which is given to them), without fear of being recognized; but it is not perhaps surprising, considering the fear in which these criminals are held, that the victims never admit that they recognize the thieves.

The house, however, may be protected. Powdered root of *ikisebe* is spread all over the house, and any thief who enters will have sores breaking out on his lips, a thing which happens only to thieves who have ignored this charm.

789 Kondeland should be a paradise for debtors, for the 426 man who knows the ropes can arrange to put off pay-

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

789 ment so often that finally it is either not paid at all,
426 or paid when it is quite convenient for the debtor to
• do so. To secure this desirable result the debtor, when he learns that his creditor is coming to demand payment, slips out into the bush, where he gets the roots of a plant called *butisi*, which he chews as the creditor approaches. A most amiable conversation ensues, at the end of which the creditor begs his friend on no account to disturb himself about the small matter that lies between them: any other time will do just as well, and he will be delighted to call again in a couple of months or so. The same end is attained by incising a powder into the forehead between the eyes.

789 Hunting medicines have already been referred to.
224 One is incised along the bone from the thumb to the
763 elbow; another is taken internally, but this latter is dangerous, because it leads to a lingering death. When death draws on, instead of dying as common men do, the whole body of the hunter who drinks this medicine becomes helpless; the heart keeps going, the lips move and talk; death does not come. Then his friends come and sing to him: "*Ndembo syaya mmiyombo*," the elephants are among the trees. The sick man, puffing out his cheeks, emits breath with a whirring sound, which is supposed to resemble a sound made by elephants, and presently he breathes his last.

755 But there are few ills, imaginary or otherwise, for which there are no cures, imaginary or otherwise: and the cautious hunter, finding old age creeping on him, and his hunting days becoming a thing of

10:Gulliver E-5 (1954-1955) 1958 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

Security of tenure has continued into European times, and although perhaps weakened slightly in one way through the exaggerated powers which accrue to modern Government-supported chiefs, it has been strengthened by the modern peace and rule of law and the more efficient system of justice provided by the established local courts. According to G. Wilson (Wilson, G., 1938, p. 32) the increase in the movement of individuals between villages in earlier European times (i.e., up to about 1940-45) directly caused a lack of attachment to individual plots, and thus security of tenure was not considered particularly important.

The new situation of land shortage does not affect the basic position, or rather, by producing a high scarcity value on land, it has brought about an intensification of individuals' rights over their holdings. No longer dare a chief or headman attempt to commit such illegal acts as the seizure of a villager's field, so long as that villager is not afraid to publicise the affair. A man is not, and cannot afford to be, prepared to lose his field, for he cannot replace it with any certainty, either in a convenient location or elsewhere. A headman may sometimes bring strong pressure to bear on some of the men of his village to try to persuade them to give up portions of their land to assist a newcomer or a landless neighbour, but a villager can and does refuse and there is no legal authority which can override him here. As the land shortage becomes more obvious and more acute so men become less willing to allow their holdings to be touched for any reason, by anyone. The re-allocation at a "coming-out" ceremony appears to have been dropped nowadays[1] and thus a man holds his land undisturbed until his death, when it passes by inheritance to his sons. There are cases now where grandsons of the original holder occupy land through undisturbed and undisputed inheritance. A man can, as he wishes, loan a kinsman or friend a plot in his holding, or he can make an outright gift. The principal restriction which remains is that a man must continue to live in the village in order to retain these rights; he must relinquish them if he permanently goes to live elsewhere. Nevertheless, the land of a well-established villager would be kept for him pending his hoped-for return, for if he has left in umbrage and fear because of suspected witchcraft, then he may be persuaded to come back after a time. The headman and his neighbours should in fact persist in their attempts to persuade him, even to the use of force, for this is not only a moral duty of age-mates and fellow-villagers but is also an effort to remove the implications of their alleged witchcraft and anti-social conduct.

Once, therefore, a man obtains land he has absolute rights in it during his continued residence in the village. Especially today, older men seldom shift their homes and almost all land is now held on a tenure which will be passed on by inheritance. .

Boundary disputes are few. Usually, and increasingly, village boundaries are well known, and field boundaries invariably are. During my field measurements in the sample villages, I never met any difficulty with my local teams in quickly establishing the ownership and exact limits of any plot. Boundaries are usually marked by small ridges of accumulated debris or by narrow paths, and these form an intricate and irregular network throughout a village's arable area. They are so well known that there is very little scope for a greedy man to attempt to encroach on a neighbour's holding at hoeing time. If minor disagreements do arise at that season they can be immediately settled – by appeal to neighbours working nearby if necessary – and the headman or his assistant may well not be called in at all.

1. This is the case in the Lake Plain. In some of the more conservative highland chiefdoms where the rule of succession is less advanced and land scarcity is not serious, there still appears to be some re-allocation in favour of the young men in the traditional way. In general, however, it is clear that the traditional age-village system of land allocation is obsolete, see pages 244.